



Memorandum

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: COURTNEY DAMKROGER

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: December 2, 2004

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 3

SNI AREA: Market-Almaden



SUBJECT: CA04-001. DESIGNATION OF THE MARKET ALMADEN CONSERVATION AREA, APPROXIMATELY BOUNDED BY THE REAR OF PROPERTIES ON BALBACH STREET TO THE NORTH, THE REAR OF PROPERTIES ON SOUTH MARKET STREET TO THE EAST, HIGHWAY 280 TO THE SOUTH, AND ALMADEN AVENUE TO THE WEST.

RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Landmarks Commission voted 7-0-0 to recommend that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council approve the designation of the subject area as the Market-Almaden Conservation Area.

BACKGROUND

On December 1, 2004, the Historic Landmarks Commission held a public hearing to consider a Council-initiated Conservation Area designation. Staff recommended approval of the proposed Conservation Area. No members of the public spoke for or against the project. A copy of the staff report and attachments from the Historic Landmarks Commission meeting is attached to provide a more detailed background on the Conservation Area designation process and qualifications of the Market Almaden neighborhood.

Commissioner Youmans commented that public and private projects have been slowly chipping away at the Market Almaden Neighborhood and questioned whether the Conservation Area nomination was brought forward to rectify problems created by these projects. Staff responded that, while development has encroached upon the edges of the Market-Almaden neighborhood, the City has worked with the neighborhood to preserve and enhance what remains. These efforts are apparent through the City initiated Market-Almaden Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) Plan process and the City Council approval of the Market Almaden Improvement Plan in March 2003. Furthermore, the Council approved Market Almaden SNI Neighborhood Improvement

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Plan includes priority actions and recommendations that the City and the Redevelopment Agency are working collaboratively with the Market Almaden community to implement. Staff noted that the impetus for the proposed Conservation Area is the Market Almaden SNI Plan's Top Ten Priority Action Number 4, "Explore the Establishment of the Market Almaden Area as a Conservation Area."

Chair Polcyn asked how the interface with the Convention Center would be addressed and if the Convention Center was on board with the Conservation Area. Staff responded that the Market Almaden Plan includes design guidelines intended to guide adjacent new development, including the expansion of the Convention Center, to ensure that this development is compatible with and does not detract from the quality of life in the Market Almaden Neighborhood. Staff also noted that the Department of Convention, Arts and Entertainment participated in the development of the Market Almaden Neighborhood Improvement Plan and is aware of the proposed Conservation Area.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

At their June 15, 2004 meeting the Market-Almaden Neighborhood Advisory Committee passed a motion 10 to 0 to accept the consultant study entitled "Discussion of Potential Conservation Area" and recommend that the City initiate the process to establish the Market-Almaden Conservation Area.

A property owners' meeting was held on Wednesday October 13th. All property owners within the proposed Conservation Area were invited. Seven property owners attended. Questions were raised about the permitting process required should a Conservation Area be established. Staff described the process. No opposition to the proposed Conservation Area was expressed at this meeting and a number of property owners expressed support for the proposal.

A public hearing notice for the project was published in a local newspaper and mailed to all property owners and tenants within 500 feet of the subject site.

Staff has received one letter in support of the project from Steven Burbank, President of the Market Almaden Neighborhood Association.

COORDINATION

This project was coordinated with the Redevelopment Agency and the City Attorney.

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COURTNEY DAMKROGER
Secretary, Historic Landmarks Commission

Attachments: December 1, 2004 Historic Landmarks Commission staff report
Map
Archives & Architecture, "Discussion of Potential Conservation Area" report
Market Almaden Neighborhood Association letter of support

PBCE002/Historic/CA Nominations/CA04-001 PC Memo

